

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 01453 150924Z

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1455

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1453

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, PFOR, BU

SUBJECT: THRACIAN EXHIBIT

REF: A) SOFIA 1357; B) STATE 169765

1. AMBASSADOR POPOV CALLED ON AMB JULY 14 AND REPORTED GOB HAS MADE FIRM DECISION TO SHOW THRACIAN EXHIBIT ONLY AT METROPOLITAN MUSEUM IN NEW YORK. (WE HAD OF COURSE NOTIFIED HIM ABOUT WASHINGTON SITUATION AS PER REF B AS SOON AS HE COULD BE REACHED, JULY 12, PRIOR TO HIS MEETING WITH OFFICIALS OF COMMITTEE OF ART AND CULTURE.) POPOV WAS CAREFUL TO AVOID ANY NOTE OF CRITICISM OF HANDLING OF THE PLACEMENT OF THE EXHIBIT BY SMITHSONIAN OR ANYONE ELSE, CLAIMING THAT EXIGENCIES OF SCHEDULING IN OTHER COUNTRIES MADE IT IMPRACTICABLE TO SHOW THE THRACIAN EXHIBIT IN OTHER US CITIES.

2. THE ONLY THING THAT NOW NEEDS TO BE DONE BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT, POPOV SAID, IS TO TELL THE BULGARIAN EMBASSY WHETHER THEY SHOULD CONTINUE TO DEAL THROUGH THE INTERMEDIARY OF SITES OR WHETHER THEY COULD DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE METROPOLITAN IN DRAWING UP THE CONTRACT. HE SAID "SINCE THE STATE DEPARTMENT WILL BECOME THE GUARANTOR, AS IT WAS THE CASE OF THE SCYTHIAN ART EXHIBIT OF THE USSR, WE MUST ABIDE BY THEIR WISHES ON WHETHER TO DEAL DIRECTLY OR THROUGH SITES." AS SOON AS WORD IS RECEIVED ON THIS, A LAWYER REPRESENTING THE GOB WOULD MEET WITH LAWYERS REPRESENTING (DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY) THE METROPOLITAN.

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PAGE 02 SOFIA 01453 150924Z

HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT GOB IS ANXIOUS NOT TO DISPLEASE

THE SMITHSONIAN SINCE THE LATTER "MAY BE PICKING UP
PART OF THE COSTS OF INSURANCE."

3. ALL CONDITIONS PUT BY THE METROPOLITAN HAVE BEEN
MET, POPOV SAID. GOB HAS AGREED TO CREATION OF A
"CORPORATE COMMITTEE OF PATRONS"; AN EXPERT OF THE
METROPOLITAN IS EXPECTED HERE NEXT MONDAY TO MAKE MOLDS
FOR MANUFACTURE OF REPRODUCTIONS THAT WILL BE SOLD BY
THE METROPOLITAN; AND A PHOTOGRAPHER IS TO COME TO
TAKE PICTURES FOR THE CATALOGUE, WHICH COULD BE DONE
EITHER HERE OR IN WARSAW (WHERE THE EXHIBIT WILL BE IN
SEPTEMBER) OR IN BOTH PLACES. WHILE SHOWINGS AT OTHER
US MUSEUMS AT SOME FUTURE TIME ARE NOT EXCLUDED
("NOTHING IS EVER EXCLUDED," POPOV SAID) GOB IS ANXIOUS
TO BUTTON UP ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE METROPOLITAN AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE. BULGARIAN CHARGE HAS INSTRUCTIONS THAT
WILL ENABLE HIM TO MOVE AS SOON AS HE HAS WORD FROM
THE DEPARTMENT ON HOW HE IS TO PROCEED.
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